public offer in 1994-95 out of which ten were not traceable. During 1997-98, 45 companies came out with public offering and out of these, seven companies were not traceable.

(c) and (d) The details of these companies were forwarded by SEBI to Department of Company Affairs (DCA) and DCA has initiated action under Sec. 146 of the Companies Act, 1956 against these seventeen companies.

Himachal Government's request for financial assistance

184. SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have been requested to provide financial assistance to Himachal Pradesh to enable it to tide over the current financial problems;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Central Government propose to consider these requests in the interest of welfare of the people of Himachal Pradesh;

(d) whether the Central Government also propose to take some steps to ensure that such financial assistance is invested genuinely in development programmes by the State Government; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and by when such assistance is likely to be granted?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. State Government of H.P. had requested for one time grant of Rs. 1000 crores to meet their budgetary gap during 1998-99.

(c) and (e) The request was considered and Ways and Means Advance of Rs. 100 crores was provided during May, 1998, to solve the immediate financial problem of the State which is being recovered in equal instalments. In addition, Rs. 100 crore has been released to the State as Special Plan assistance and another Rs. 100 crores is being released as project related assistance based on the progress of expenditure.

(d) Central Assistance for State Plan is released, based on the expenditure figures furnished by the State Government to Government of India. However, State Government is accountable to the State legislature for proper utilisation of funds through the Audit Reports prepared by the CAG of India.

White Paper on crisis in UTI

185. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the crisis in the UTI with regard to US 64;

(b) whether Government have investigated the reported fall in the net asset value of the US 64; and

(c) whether Government will consider issue of white paper to regain the confidence of the investors in UTI?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) and (b) According to Unit Trust of India, due to unfavourable stock market conditions, there was a notional depreciation in value of US-64 investment of the order of Rs. 3566 crore as on 30th June, 1998.

(c) Government is not considering any such proposal.

Schemes for extending loans to poor Students

186. SHRI GOVIND RAM MIRI:
SHRI PARAG CHALIHA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of different schemes developed by public sector/ nationalised banks for extending loans to poor students for pursuing higher technical and medical education in India and abroad;